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so as to obtain extracted feature information, and a verifying means 4 for verifying (e.g., by comparing) the extracted feature information with registered information of the individual, which is registered in advance, so as to authenticate the individual.

[Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 10, as follows:]

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Since the registered information is made up of the feature information which is extracted from the biometric information and converted, the original biometric information cannot be read by a third party even if the registered information is stolen or is leaked. As a result, it is possible to positively prevent a leak of privacy information even if there is a leak, or a theft, of an individual's extracted and converted biometric information.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 7, as follows:

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When verifying the biometric information, the converted biometric information verifying unit 15 verifies the verifying biometric information which is obtained from the verifying biometric information generating unit 14, with respect to the registered biometric information which is obtained from the converted biometric information storage managing unit 22, and makes an authentication as to whether or not the user is actually the user himself who is registered. More particularly, the converted biometric information verifying unit 15 carries out the authentication based on whether or not the verifying biometric information and the registered biometric information match under a predetermined condition.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please REPLACE claims and ADD new claims, in accordance with the following:

~~17 (AS ONCE AMENDED HEREIN) An authentication apparatus for authenticating an individual by verifying input biometric information with respect to registered biometric information, comprising:~~

~~measuring means for measuring biometric information of the individual;~~

~~converting means for carrying out a predetermined conversion process, selected from a group consisting of expansion, compression, rotation, deformation, affine transformation, morphing, coordinate transformation, function process, parameter conversion, frequency~~

conversion, time base conversion, and rearrangement of bit sequences, with respect to the biometric information so as to obtain converted biometric information; and
 registering means for registering the converted biometric information.

25. (AS ONCE AMENDED HEREIN) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing a computer to authenticate an individual by verifying input biometric information with respect to registered biometric information, comprising:
 measuring means for causing the computer to measure biometric information of the individual;
 converting means for causing the computer to carry out a predetermined conversion process, selected from a group consisting of expansion, compression, rotation, deformation, affine transformation, morphing, coordinate transformation, function process, parameter conversion, frequency conversion, time base conversion, and rearrangement of bit sequences, with respect to the biometric information so as to obtain converted biometric information; and
 registering means for causing the computer to register the converted biometric information.

27. (AS NEW HEREIN) An authentication apparatus, comprising:
 a measuring unit measuring biometric information of an individual;
 a converter converting the biometric information and outputting converted biometric information;
 an extractor extracting feature information from the converted biometric information and outputting extracted feature information; and
 a verifier comparing the extracted, converted feature information with registered, corresponding information of the individual, which is registered in advance, to authenticate the individual.

28. (AS NEW HEREIN) An authentication apparatus comprising:
 a measuring unit measuring biometric information of an individual;
 an extractor extracting feature information from the biometric information and outputting extracted feature information;

a converter converting the extracted feature information and outputting converted and extracted feature information; and

a verifier comparing the converted, extracted feature information with registered, corresponding information of the individual, which is registered in advance, to authenticate the individual.

29. (AS NEW HEREIN) A computer-readable memory medium which stores a program for causing a computer to authenticate an individual, by:

measuring biometric information of an individual;

converting the measured biometric information to produce converted biometric information;

extracting the converted biometric information to produce extracted, converted feature information; and

comparing the extracted, converted feature information with registered, corresponding information of the individual, which is registered in advance, so as to authenticate the individual.

30. (AS NEW HEREIN) A computer-readable memory medium which stores a program for causing a computer to authenticate an individual, by:

measuring biometric information of an individual;

extracting feature information from the measured biometric information and producing extracted feature information;

converting the extracted feature information and producing converted extracted feature information; and

comparing the converted extracted feature information with registered, corresponding information of the individual, which is registered in advance, to authenticate the individual.